

A

# REVIEW

OF THE

# STATE

OF THE

# BRITISH NATION.

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Thursday, August 31. 1710.

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I Was designing, as may appear in my last, to have Examined farther the Address of the London Clergy, and the particular manner, in which, *at least to me*, they seem to Recognize the great Doctrine of Resistance, and promise to practise it.

But if by Examining the General System, these Things may be brought to a right Understanding, I think it is the more peaceable Way; and therefore having a great desire to make this Paper a Reconciler of Differences, I shall now, tho' it take me up more time than usual, enter into a full Enquiry after, and search to the Bottom,

the present Debates, which so much Agitate our Minds, about *Hereditary-Right* and *Non-Resistance*.

I know I am going about a very difficult Work, yet the difficulty lies not so much in the Argument, as in the Temper of the People I am arguing with, to whom it is neither grateful, nor as they think, for their Convenience, to be undeceived.

However, I shall set about the Work, and with this Assurance, that if it miscarry, it shall not be for want of Demonstration — And if you will not receive it, the Negative shall not be for want of Obstinate Blindness.

I

I know I am to struggle with, 1. *Your Pride*, from whence flow strong Streams of Opinion-Wisdom, 2. *Your Politicks*, from whence proceeds the Maxim, that 'tis your Interest to disagree; and 3. *Your Inclination*, visibly pleas'd with Strife, and fond of Contention ———

As my difficulties from hence will be the greater, it behoves me to lay down every Thing so plain, that if possible, it may leave no room for those to take hold, who are fondest of Contradiction.

If my Style therefore, appears a little more Laconick; if my Periods are shorter than usual, and I seem to affect being Sententious; you will bear with my being less Polite, for the sake of my being less Imper-tinent.

Our present Disputes, *alas how trifling!* are resolv'd into two Generals ———

Which if they are Overthrown, 'tis humbly conceiv'd, the Particulars drawn from them, will fall of themselves.

1. Whether her present Majesty's Title to the Crown is Hereditary, or Subject to Parliamentary Limitation?
2. Whether Resistance in any Case whatsoever, be Lawful in the Subject against the Prince?

If in my Examination of these Things, I shall make it clear to you, that *Hereditary-Right* and *Parliamentary Limitation*, are the same thing, That *Resistance*, and *Non-Resistance*, have no specifick difference in them ——— And that a right understanding of this, would reconcile us all; it will be a very keen Satyr upon our Folly, and show that this whole Nation has made a great Noise about nothing.

This is the Labour I am going to undertake, I see no difficulty in the Thing itself, the Demonstration is easie ——— The Argu-

ment plain, and the Contraries have in themselves, a propensity to Unite.

But how to open the Eyes of a People, who in both these Points are born Blind; *Hic Labor hoc Opus.*

*London*, like *Niniveh*, has so many Thousand Souls that know not their Right-Hand from their Left, in this Matter, that it were pity not to inform them; but it has also so much Cattle, *Jonah*, 4. 12. i.e. So many Brutes that will not be inform'd, that 'tis enough to make a Man of more Resolution than I, despair.

An Ass is so much an Ass, that if you turn him seven Years to Grass, you will never take him up a Horse ——— And *Solomon's* Fool tho' bray'd in a Mortar, wou'd in spite of the Mollifying Operation, come out a Fool, just as he went in.

*Sed nil desperandum*, it must have some good Effect, to set Things in a clear View, must first or last, be a benefit to some Body; If a Hand be set up at a Cross-Way, pointing out the right Road; tho' 'tis of no use to him, that makes no use of it, yet 'twill for ever remain of use to him, that is not willing to go out of the Way.

At the worst, it shall divest the hardened Age of all excuses for their Errors, and Posterity shall never say, in defence of their Fathers, that they were not told it, or that they knew no better.

One Thing more before I begin, and I'll have done with Preambles.

I must pay Homage here, to the two greatest helps I have receiv'd in this great Work; and therefore in Justice to the *London*-Clergy, and to the Itinerate Dr, I must acknowledge, that their great Labours, the one in their late wonderful Address, and the other, in his great want of ADDRESS, endeavouring to lay open the difference of these Things, have very much Contributed to confirm me in this Great Truth, That there is no difference in them at all ——— And so I come to my Point.

### And first OF HEREDITARY RIGHT.

And here to avoid Shifters, and shifting too, I lay down, That by Hereditary-Right,

I mean without Circumlocution, the Hereditary-Right of the present Queen, to the



the Crown of *England*——The Hereditary Right of all those her Majesty's Predecessors, Kings or Queens of this Kingdom, who have gone before her, or Successors that shall come after her.

Mr. *Asgill* will Pardon me I hope, for pursuing his most Excellent Method, in which he has so unanswerably prov'd, the Divine Hereditary Right of the Elektor of *Hannover* ; and if I borrow any thing from him, I shall do Justice to the Lender, and always pull off my Cap, and make my Leg for his License, in applying it to the uses and purposes he has fitted it for.

That Ingenious Author, has, in searching the Original of the Title of the Kings of *Israel*, and the Right they had to their Regal Authority, happily found out the Entail, in these Prophetick Expressions of the Old Patriarch *Jacob*, when he took leave of his Sons——And the World, both together.

*The Scepter shall not depart from Judah, or a Law-giver from between his Feet, until Shiloh come.*

Here I crave leave for a Digression, tho' perfectly remote to my Case, being a Duty in Solemn Recognition of the Glorious fulfilling this promise of the *MESSIAH*, in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ into the World——And which, if any of the Jews would please to consider——It would either convince them, that the promised *MESSIAH* is already come, or put them to some difficulty, to make out what they say they believe, viz. That the Prophecies of the Old Testament are Divine ; and they may as well give over expecting him, as not believe he is come.

They all grant that in this Text, by *SHILOH*, is meant the *MESSIAH* who shall come, and that the Scepter

shall not depart, *viz* the *MESSIAH* shall come.

They must also allow, that the Scepter is departed from *Judah*, they have neither King, nor Law-giver among them, neither ever have had since the Destruction of their City and Temple by the Romans. Wherefore the *MESSIAH* must be already come, or that Prophecy was false, and is not, nor can ever be fulfill'd——But this by the Way.

I now return to the Case in Hand.

If I make a just Abridgment of Mr. *Asgill's* Argument, it is——That this being a settlement of the Inheritance upon the Tribe, what ever Branch of the Tribe at any time posses'd it, whether in a Right, or Collateral Line, his Title was Hereditary, and that it was not necessary that the immediate Heir, that is the Eldest Branch, should be the Heir in Tail, since the first Settlement was an Entail upon, and special to the Tribe, yet not limiting it to the Eldest Branch of that Tribe——

And his Instances are opposite to the Point, viz. 1. That God pass'd by the Eldest Branch of the Royal House, viz. *Shelah*, (who was *Judah's* Eldest Son——*Er* and *Onan* dying without Issue) and took *Pharez* who was the Younger, and by a second Wife, of whose Race *Jesse* the Father of *David* proceeded, in a Direct Line. And 2. That in pitching upon this Younger Branch, the Entail was not fix'd upon the Eldest Branch, even of *Jesse*, but upon *David* the Youngest, his seven Elder Brothers being all brought and presented before him——And thus Again in many succeeding Princes of *Judah*, as of *Solomon* in particular——And yet the Entail being settled upon the Tribe, not on any particular Branch——The Possession of any Branch of that Tribe, was truly Hereditary.

Thus far Mr. *ASGILL*,

I shall run the Parallel to its full extent, in the Succession of our Kings and Queens, to the Crown of *England* ; and tho' perhaps I may not find so excellent a Period, from

whence to begin the Entail of the Crown of *England*, (now *Britain*) as that Prophetick Inspir'd Declaration of the Patriarch *Jacob*, in behalf of the Tribe of *Judah* ;

Yer



Yet if I produce an Indisputable Title, Recogniz'd by all the World, and continu'd by that Prescription, which in all other Cases is allow'd sufficient, to the Possession or Inheritance of any Estate in these Nations, I shall have as clear a Foundation, as any Title in the World can make out.

I might content my self with saying, that the Title of our Sovereigns is sufficiently confirm'd, in that it is not disputed either within the Realm, or without, by any Pretender, by any dormant Claim, or by any suppos'd Injury whatsoever — I mean now, not the Descent of this or that particular Branch of the Family, but the Right of the Royal Family itself.

The Royal Family of *England* being, after the *Saxon* Invasion, rejoyn'd with the *British*, after the *Danish* Invasion rejoyn'd with the *Saxon*, and after the *Norman* Conquest again rejoyn'd with the *English*; seems to me, to continue in the same Race or Tribe where it was found, wherever History can trace the least appearance of a Royal Power.

Not that this at all proves the Divine Original of the Race, or of their Title to the Crown, unless it could appear, that the first Entail was a Settlement from Heaven, like that of *Fudab* among the Tribes.

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